

Moving Tips for You -- Substantiate your items

1. Videotape your property prior to the carrier coming to pack. A good audio and video description is invaluable if your property should be destroyed or lost. Get access to a video or digital camera, take video/digital recording on tapes or download on a CD/DVD. Show electronic and mechanical items in operation to verify the condition prior to shipment. TAKE a few minutes to do the recordings and take it with you. Do not put it in your household goods shipment.
2. Jewelry and other high value items should not be shipped. Examples of other high value items are coins, stamp collections, sports cards collections, crystal animals, Beanie Babies, Barbie dolls, etc.
3. If you decide high value items are to be shipped, they ABSOLUTELY must be listed on the pickup inventory. In addition, you must be able to substantiate what you owned and its preshipment value.
4. Before the move, prepare your own personal inventory and gather substantiation of your major items (original purchase receipts, charge card receipts, preshipment appraisals, etc. for electronic equipment, art objects, paintings, collections, furniture, grandfather clocks, German schanks, etc). Keep this information separate from your household goods. Carry it with you or mail it to your next duty station.
5. The preparation of the pickup inventory is the most crucial step in the moving process. You simply must control the packing and inventorying of your household goods.
6. Watch the carrier employee who fills out your inventory to make sure he or she describes the condition of your property correctly. If you disagree, document the specific reason for your disagreement at the bottom of each inventory page.
7. The most common complaint by members is that there were a lot of packers, and it was too hard to watch everything. Nevertheless, you or your agent must understand that you have to exercise some control and authority. If totally overwhelmed, call your local personal property counseling office and complain.
8. If you, the member, cannot be present at the time of packing and pickup, make sure your spouse or agent knows what to do and arrange for help if necessary. Please note, an agent acting on your behalf is equivalent to you being there in person. You will be bound by and responsible for any mistakes they make.
9. Make sure the packers write adequate descriptions of the contents on the boxes themselves, and on the pickup inventory. Every item does not have to be listed, but the general category of the contents should be on the outside of each box. Again, if you disagree, document why on the bottom of the inventory.
10. Make sure that items that would not logically be packed in a box based on the contents description are specifically listed. Examples: lamp packed in a box marked garage, or a TV in a box marked clothing.
11. It is your move and you are in charge of it. Protect yourself by ensuring that the quantity, quality and condition of your property is accurately recorded and noted on the inventories and by any other means available, BEFORE the shipment leaves your control.